IN THE CLAIMS

1-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing bisphenol A, comprising the following steps:

transferring phenol and acetone into a reaction zone charged with condensation catalyst, obtaining a stream containing bisphenol A after reaction;

transferring the obtained stream containing bisphenol A into a rectification zone. obtaining a product fraction primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol; and

transferring the product fraction primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol into a crystallization zone to obtain a bisphenol A product;

wherein a water-depleted fraction in liquid primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone and having a water content that is controlled at a level of not greater than 2% by weight is obtained from the rectification zone, and said water-depleted fraction is cooled and returned as a cycled stream to the reaction zone.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein said reaction zone is an adiabatic fixed bed reactor comprising one adiabatic fixed bed reactor or two or more adiabatic fixed bed reactors arranged in series.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein when said reaction zone comprises two or more adiabatic fixed bed reactors arranged in series, the water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is returned to any one

of the reactors or to each reactor proportionally.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein when said reaction zone comprises two or more adiabatic fixed bed reactors arranged in series, the water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is returned to the last reactor only.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 16, wherein the weight ratio of the cycled flow rate of said water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone to the flow rate of the feed stream to the reactor, into which said water-depleted fraction enters, is in the range from 5:1 to 15:1.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the weight ratio of the cycled flow rate of said water-depleted fraction primarily phenol, bisphenol A and acetone to the flow rate of the feed stream to the reactor, into which said water-depleted fraction enters, is in the range from 5:1 to 15:1.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein said rectification zone is a rectification column, the water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is a side draw of said rectification column, and a product fraction primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol is discharged from the bottom of said rectification column.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 20, wherein the operation pressure of said rectification column is in the range of 50-800mmHg (absolute pressure).

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein said rectification zone is a rectification column, the water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is a side draw of said rectification column, and a product fraction

primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol is discharged from the bottom of said rectification column.

24. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein said rectification zone is composed of a flash drum and a rectification column, the bisphenol A-containing stream from the reaction zone is transferred into the flash drum, a water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is discharged from the bottom of the flash drum, part of said water-depleted fraction is cycled back to the reaction zone, the residual part is transferred into the rectification column, and a product fraction primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol is discharged from the bottom of said rectification column.

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein the operation pressure of said flash drum in the rectification zone is in the range of 50-800mmHg (absolute pressure).

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein said rectification zone is composed of a flash drum and a rectification column, the bisphenol A-containing stream from the reaction zone is transferred into the flash drum, a water-depleted fraction primarily containing phenol, bisphenol A and acetone is discharged from the bottom of the flash drum, part of said water-depleted fraction is cycled back to the reaction zone, the residual part is transferred into the rectification column, and a product fraction primarily containing bisphenol A and phenol is discharged from the bottom of said rectification column.

28. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the molar ratio of phenol to acetone in said reaction zone is in the range from 3:1 to 30:1, the condensation temperature in said reaction zone is in the range of 50-130°C, and the condensation pressure is from atmosphere to 61cg/cm2 (gage pressure).

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the molar ratio of phenol to acetone in said reaction zone is in the range from 3:1 to 30:1, the condensation temperature in said reaction zone is in the range of -0-130°C, and the condensation pressure is from atmosphere to 61cg/cm2 (gage pressure).

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein in the crystallization zone the crystallization is carried out once only.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein in the crystallization zone the crystallization is carried out once only.

33. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein the method provides a conversion of acetone and a selectivity of reaction to bisphenol A that are higher than can be achieved by the method if the fraction that is cooled and returned as a cycled stream to the reaction zone were not water-depleted.

34. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein the method provides a conversion of acetone of 86 to 88%.

35. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein the method provides a selectivity of reaction to bisphenol A of 94-96%.